

Message Text

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INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
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FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
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S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 MOSCOW 10230

E.O. 11652: XGDS
TAGS: PINT US UR
SUBJECT: DARTMOUTH CONFERENCE ON US-SOVIET RELATIONS

REF: MOSCOW 10082

SUMMARY: FOLLOWING IS OVERVIEW OF JULY 9-13 DARTMOUTH
CONFERENCE BASED LARGELY ON COMMENTS OF SONNEFELDT
AND DOTY. REMARKS OF NORMAN COUNSINS REPORTED SEPTEL. END SUMMARY.

1. THE SETTING - SOVIETS MORE POLEMICAL, LESS CONSTRUCTIVE:
COMPARED WITH RECENT PREVIOUS CONFERENCES SOVIET STANCE WAS MORE
POLEMICAL, HARD HITTING AND LESS CONSTRUCTIVE ON ISSUES.
EVEN BEFORE CONFERENCE, ARBATOV HAD TOLD OLIN ROBISON
SOVIETS WERE "ASTONISHED" AT US POSITION PAPER STATEMENTS
ON ARMS CONTROL AND HUMAN RIGHTS (US AND SOVIET POSITION
PAPERS BEING POUCHED).
AT CONFERENCE AND IN PRIVATE DISCUSSIONS, SOVIETS LET FLY
ON US POLICIES ON BOTH ISSUES IN MANNER WHICH LED
SONNEFELDT TO QUIP TO SOVIETS THAT HE FELT
15 YEARS YOUNGER BECAUSE SOVIETS' POLEMICAL
REMARKS SOUNDED LIKE THE NINETEEN SIXTIES.
PREDICTABLY UNIFIED IN THEIR POLEMICS, SOVIETS
WERE EQUALLY MUM ON REASONS BEHIND PODGORNNY'S

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2. SOVIET VIEW OF PRESIDENT CARTER AND WHITE
HOUSE:
AS ALSO RELAYED TO US BY OTHER SOURCES OVER PAST
SEVERAL MONTHS, SOVIETS SAID THEY WERE "BAFFLED",
"MYSTIFIED", "PUZZLED" "PERPLEXED" OVER PRESIDENT

CARTER AND SEEMED GENUINELY UNCLEAR WHERE THIS ADMINISTRATION IS GOING. SOME TOLD SONNENFELDT THEY COULD NOT MAKE UP MINDS WHETHER BEHIND HIS PRONOUNCEMENTS.

CARTER WAS REALLY HARDER OR SOFTER THAN HIS PREDECESSORS. THEY MISSED SINGLE POINT OF AUTHORITY SUCH AS KISSINGER AND POINTED BRZEZINSKI AS DEVIL IN WHITE HOUSE. SONNENFELDT ALSO SAID THAT THE SOVIETS HAVE DEVELOPED NOTION OF A "POLISH MAFIA" RUNNING US POLICY: BRZEZINSKI AND HARVARD PROFESSORS ULAM AND PIPES. SONNENFELDT SAYS HE TOLD THEM TO PAY ATTENTION TO PRESIDENT CARTER AND TO AVOID MISTAKEN PAPER TIGER MENTALITY TOWARD HIM.

3. ARMS CONTROL:

--SOVIETS HAD NO NEW IDEAS, BLAMED EVERYTHING ON US FOR CURRENT HIATUS;
--RE SOVIET FORMULA EMPHASIZING BAN ON NEW WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION, DOTY AND SONNENFELDT ARGUED THAT IMPROVEMENT OF EXISTING SYSTEMS WAS JUST AS BIG THREAT TO STABILITY (THIS POINT RECOGNIZED IN ANNEX I TO JOINT COMMUNIQUE). THEREFORE, US SIDE ARGUED, PRESIDENT'S MARCH SALT PROPOSAL FOR COMPREHENSIVE CUTS WAS TRULY RADICAL. SOVIETS RESPONDED BY CRITICISING THE MARCH PROPOSAL AS AN ATTEMPT TO FORCE THE SOVIETS
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INTO ACCEPTING THE US TRIAD CONCEPT (APPARENTLY BY CLOSING OUT MISSILE DEVELOPMENT). SONNENFELDT SAID HE ARGUED THAT THE SOVIETS ALREADY HAVE THEIR OWN TRIAD (ICBM'S SLBMS AND MLBMS). IN ARGUING THAT THE PROPOSAL WAS ONE-SIDED, THE SOVIETS CITED AS EXAMPLE THAT THE LIMITATION OF MISSILE TESTS TO SIX PER YEAR WOULD ALLOW THE US TO TEST ONE MISSILE SIX TIMES, WHILE THE SOVIETS WITH A GREATER VARIETY OF MISSILES WOULD ONLY BE ABLE TO TEST EACH ONE ONLY ONCE.

--ALTHOUGH SOVIETS INSISTED PRIVATELY THAT THEY SUPPORT CONCEPT OF MUTUAL DETERRENCE (I.E., MUTUAL ASSURED DESTRUCTION) ARBATOV AND OTHERS RESISTED US OF FORMULA IN PUBLIC. DOTY AND SONNENFELDT BELIEVE THIS BASED ON SOVIETS CONCERN OVER EFFECT ON MORALE OF PUBLICLY EMBRACING CONCEPT THAT ADMITS USSR COULD BE OPEN TO MASS DESTRUCTION AND THAT USSR COULD NOT WIN NUCLEAR WAR. (DURING VISIT TO RIGA WAR MEMORIAL SOVIETS EMPHASIZED THAT PUBLIC REFERENCES TO ASSURED MASS DESTRUCTION WOULD RESURRECT HORRIBLE MEMORIES.) DOTY TOLD SOVIETS THEIR ALLEGED ACCEPTANCE OF MUTUAL DETERRENCE

DID NOT STAND UP WELL IN LIGHT OF THEIR REACTION
RE B-1 AND CRUISE MISSILE, AND WARNED THAT
CONTINUED ASSYMETRY IN AIR DEFENSE WOULD DRIVE US
FURTHER ALONG ROAD TO AIR DEFENSE PENETRATION. HE
ALSO NOTES THAT, ALTHOUGH THE SOVIETS INSIST ON
VLADIVOSTOK, THEY CONTINUE TO UPGRADE THEIR AIR
DEFENSES THUS MAKING CRUISE MISSILES MORE NECESSARY
FOR US. SIMILARLY SONNENFELDT WARNED THAT EACH
PART OF OUR TRIAD MUST BE ABLE TO DELIVER UNACCEPTABLE
DAMAGE FOR THE TRIAD TO BE VALID AND THAT SOVIET
ATTEMPTS TO WEAKEN ONE ELEMENT OF THE TRIAD WOULD
LEAD TO ACCELERATED TECHNOLOGY RACE INCLUDING
ANTI-SUBMARINE WARFARE, MOBILE MISSILES AND AIR
PENETRATION SYSTEMS.

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--SONNENFELDT FOUND IT NOTEWORTHY THAT DIS-
CUSSING MUTUAL DETERRENCE MIL'SHTYEA ACKNOWLEDGED
FOR FIRST TIME THAT YOU CAN DETER ONLY IF YOU HAVE
CAPABILITY TO FIGHT A WAR, I.E., THAT YOUR FORCES
ARE WILLING AND ABLE TO DESTROY THE OTHER SIDE.
--CRITICIZING US REFERENCES TO SOVIET THREAT,
SOVIETS INSISTED US SHOULD ACCEPT BREZHNEV'S
PUBLIC PROTESTATIONS OF NO INTENT TO ATTACK OTHERS.

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SONNENFELDT, DOTY AND YORK (WHO OTHERS FELT WAS

PARTICULARLY EFFECTIVE WITH SOVIETS IN VIEW OF HIS EXPERTISE AND PAST RECORDED CRITICAL COMMENT OF BOTH USG AND SOVIET DEFENSE POLICIES) POINTED OUT THAT WHILE THEY WERE NOT CALLING ON BREZHNEV'S GOOD FAITH INTO QUESTION, THE HARD FACTS OF SOVIET DEVELOPMENT, PRODUCTION AND DEPLOYMENT REQUIRED MORE THAN VERBAL ASSURANCES;

--ASKED WHY SOVIETS WERE CONDUCTING ANTI-SATELLITE WEAPONS STUDIES, ARBATOV SAID IN PRIVATE THAT LOOKING AT INTELLIGENCE PICTURE AS A WHOLE US WAS WAY AHEAD. HE ALLUDED TO POSSIBILITY OF STUDIES DIRECTED AGAINST NON-OBSERVATION SATELLITES;

---ARBATOV'S SON ALEXEY ATTEMPTED PUMP DOTY FOR 30 MINUTES WITH DETAILED QUESTIONS AT LEAST HALF OF WHICH WERE 1 CLASSIFIED FIELD, E.G. DETAILS OF MARK 12 A, MX, PADS AND FUEL SYSTEMS FOR MOBILE LAUNCHERS. HE SAID HE NEEDED INFO FOR A STUDY HE WAS UNDERTAKING.

4. MIDDLE EAST:

SOVIETS ACCEPTED US SIDE'S FORMULA FOR MIDDLE EAST IN JOINTCOMMUNIQUE. (EXAMING LANGUAGE, EGYPTIAN POLCOUNSEL FOR IMMEDIATELY COMMENTED TO US THAT SECRET

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FORMULA ON BOUNDARIES REVEALS SOVIET FLEXIBILITY.)

4. RADIOS LIBERTY AND FREE EUROPE:

SOVIETS WERE VERY UPTIGHT OVER PRESIDENT CARTER'S PUBLIC SUPPORT FOR RL/RFE. SOME SAID PRIVATELY THAT IF CERTAIN THEMES CARRIED ON VOA THEY WOULD BE LESS IRRITATING BUT TO BROADCAST THEM ON RL/RFE WAS LIKE HITTING SOVIETS IN TEETH IN VIEW OF RL/RFE REPUTATION. IN RESPONSE TO SOVIET'S CRITICISM, SONNENFELDT SURPRISED THEM BY NOTING THAT DECISION TO IMPROVE RL/RFE HAD ALSO BEEN TAKEN IN FORD ADMINISTRATION, ALTHOUGH IT PROBABLY WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN PUBLICIZED IN SAME WAY. RITA HAUSER MADE ANALOGY WITH OUR REACTION TO IMPROVED SOVIET AIR DEFENSE: AS SOVIETS SPEND MORE TO JAM RL/RFE, WE'LL SPEND MORE TO PENETRATE.

6. CARTER-BREZHNEV MEETING;

SOVIETS ECHOED CURRENT LINE THAT IT WOULD BE INAPPROPRIATE TO MEET WITHOUT ANYTHING TO SIGN. TROFIMENKO (WHOM SONNENFELDT AND DOTY CHARACTERIZED AS ASTUTE) FELT THAT CARTER AND BREZHNEV WERE SO DIFFERENT THAT WITHOUT VERY CAREFULLY PREPARED MEETING --AND DOCUMENT SO SIGN-- RESULT COULD BE CLASH SIMILAR TO KENNEDY-KHRUSHCHEV CONFRONTATION.

7. TRADE:

LAMELY NOTING THAT JOINT COMMUNIQUE'S ANNEX II ON
BILATERAL ECONOMIC COOPERATION WAS UNILATERALLY
CRITICAL OF US DISCRIMINATORY TARIFFS, CREDIT
LIMITS AND LINKAGE TO NON TRADE/NON ECONOMIC
MATTERS, SONNENFELDT SAID ROCKEFELLER, WILSON AND
KENDALL WANTED IT THAT WAY. (NOTE: AFTER DISCUSSION WITH AMBASSADOR,
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WILSON LATER TOLD ECONCOUNSELOR THAT IF HE HAD TO DO IT AGAIN
HE WOULD DO IT DIFFERENTLY).

8. THE SOVIET PRESS (PRAVDA, JULY 15) LOST NO TIME
IN COMMENTING ON THE RESULTS OF THE DARTMOUTH CONFERENCE,
AND IN NOTING THE NEGATIVE APPRAISAL OF US TRADE
"DISCRIMINATION" AGAINST THE USSR BY THE CONFEREES.
THE COMMENTARY, IN THE DAILY COMMENTATOR'S COLUMN,
GAVE A BASICALLY POSITIVE ASSESSMENT OF THE VALUE OF
THE CONFERENCES IN GENERAL, AND CLAIMED THAT DESPITE
DIFFERENCES IN APPROACH ON A NUMBER OF ISSUES THIS
TIME THAT ALL AGREED ON THE NEED TO "CONTINUE AND
STRENGTHEN THE STRUGGLE FOR THE NORMALIZATION
AND CONSTRUCTIVE DEVELOPMENT OF SOVIET-AMERICAN
RELATIONS." THE PARTICIPANTS ALSO AGREED,
ACCORDING TO PRAVDA'S GRIGORIY YUR'YEV, ON THE
NEED FOR A QUICK CONCLUSION OF A SALT AGREEMENT
TO BE FLOWED BY TALKS LEADING TO FURTHER LIMITA-
TIONS AND REDUCTIONS IN ARMAMENTS.
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